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THE SOUTH CAROLINA HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL MAGAZINE

VOL. XVI

JULY, 1915

No. 3

LETTERS TO GENERAL GREENE AND OTHERS

The following letters are printed from the originals in the possession of Arthur M. Rutledge, Esq., of Louisville, Kentucky. They came to him among his father's papers. His father was the late Major Arthur Middleton Rutledge, C.S.A., of Nashville, Tennessee, who was the son of Henry Middleton Rutledge, Esq., originally of Charleston, South Carolina, who moved early in the last century to Tennessee, and who was the only son of Edward Rutledge, of South Carolina, who was a member of the Continental Congress which made the Declaration of Independence of Fourth July, 1776, and was one of the signers of that instrument. At the time of his death in 1799 he was Governor of the State of South Carolina. These letters may have been a part of his papers, although nothing definite is known by the present owner of the letters as to how they came into the possession of the family. He has kindly allowed the Society to publish all that it may consider to be of historical interest.

[GEN. SUMTER TO GEN. GREENE]

M^r. Price's 29th January, 1781.

D^r. Sir,

I have received your favours of the 8th one without a date & of the 15th & 19th Ins^t.

You express a desire of seeing me again in the field, I am happy to know, that the service for which you most Immediately wanted

me, is no longer needfull, & Gen^l. Morgan has fortunately relieved you from your apprehensions for his safety, by defeating Coll. Tarleton, a circumstance of great consequence, upon which I must beg leave, most heartily to congratulate you. The Methods I use to obtain Inteligence may probably answer, but I am short in very special requisites for that purpose, when I had the Honour of a conference with if I discovered any injudicious thirst for enterprise, private gain, or personal Glory, I am sorry for it, and shall be doubly Mortified to find that my endeavours, together with the Good people of South Carolina, have not tended the least Degree to promote the Publick Good; I lament that private Gain is the primary Object with too many, and as much lament that the desire of Fame is not more sought after, as to the Former the world I think will acquit me, but the latter reason & Conscience convinces I have not been arrogant & designing but always meant to conduct & demean myself, so as to tend most to the Publick Good, & the satisfaction of my superior officers, the difficulty of writing obliges me to decline being as full as I could wish, the cause of my not sending you an express on sooner, was in hopes of gaining some important Inteligence to Communicate, I believe you have found that my former inteligence Respecting the force of Col^o. Tarleton & Gen. Morgan to be very just, I can with propriety say that Lord Cornwallis' whole does not exceed Sixteen hundred; when they marched from Winnsbourrough, and encamp't at Bull run, he had but six hundred & Eighty men, with this number he marched to turkey crick broad river, was there joined by Gen^l. Leslie, with a detachment of five hundred & Seventy eight men rank & file, making in the whole twelve hundred & fifty eight, since joined by Eighty from Camden, the remains of Tarleton's scattered troops, together with the Matrosses, which when aded cannot by Any Means exceed the Number above mentioned.

for farther particulars & the situation of the Army, I beg leave to recommend you to Major Myddelton, as also that of Camden, Congarees, Ninety Six, Augusta, & the state of things Generally, upon the western Quarter, I agree with you, & lament the great probability of this country being laid waste by plundering parties, as people Dayly discover a greater avidity to that shamefull practice, I had Adopted measures which would have efectually

suppress^d it, by being wounded & other interruptions have been prevented from executing that design, notwithstanding, daring as people appear to be in these practices, yet I am convinced they might easily be made to subside. A few examples, & a proper abhorrence shewen, would answer every purpose, this conduct I meant to pursue but have not been sufficiently countinenced nor supported.

I confess I have been under some embaressment respecting Gen. Morgans command, & the orders he has given, as I have been concerned but little in either trust, & believe I have been guilty of no Impropriety, and shall allways make a point to correspond & act upon such principles with Gen. Morgan, as is most likely to tend to the publick Good, and have no doubt but he well deserves all the applause you have given him, therefore will not stand upon little punctilo^s. to the prejudice of the service, there has been a great change of things in this Quarter of late, & I conceive the Enemy thinks their situations somewhat unfavourable to themselves, as well as to those Inhabitants among which they pass—and notwithstanding, the weak & scattered condition of the So. Carolina Malitia, yet their remaining in the rear of the Enemy may give them uneasy Apprehensions. Major Myddelton will be Able to give you full satisfactions relative to this Matter. I still find myself but poorly, but have hopes of being able to ride tolerably in a few days, when I shall be happy to receive your Commands.

I have the Hon^r to be D^r Sir with the greatest respect, your
Most Obed Humble Serv^t

Tho^s. Sumter.

Major Gen^l. Greene.

Endorsed:

From Gen^l. Sumter

Jan: 29th, 1781.

[BARON STEUBEN TO GEN. GREENE]

Address:

The Honorable Major Gen. Green
Commanding the
Southern Army

Steuben

Richmond Virg^a 3^d Feb^y 1781

My Dear General

Yesterday Major Giles handed me your Letter of the 24th Inst. & I sincerely Congratulate you on the fortunate & glorious events it anounces—your presence to the Southard has hitherto been favored with the Smiles of Fortune—may you my dear General experience a continuance of them the personal interest I take in every theory that can add to your Happiness & Glory is an additional motive for my wishing it.

Mr. Arnold still continues at Portsmouth—his incursions into this State notwithstanding the weak opposition I was able to oppose has not drawn my attention from the main object of reinforcing your Army, Delay was unavoidable—it was the natural result of the confusion that every thing was thrown into.

The second division of 400 Men which I expect to have sent off the 15 Jan^y will not possibly be equipped for the March before the 20th Instant I am determined to move Heaven & Earth to get them off if possible by that time. The 10th Ins. is the time fixed for the officers of the Virg Line to assemble at Chesterfield—I have given orders for relieving those of them who are now with the Militia by the Supernumerary & State Officers—Gen^l. Lawson will relieve Gen^l. Muhlenberg—some necessary arrangements to be made at Fredericksburg will prevent Gen. Wasn[?] from attending—I shall first appoint the Officers who are to attend at the places of rendezvous to receive the recruits—& send them immediately to their respective parts—A Field Officer 4 Capt^s. & 14 Subs will go with the first detachment to the southward & so with the rest.

The Cavalry are to rendezvous at Petersburg when I shall deliver them their proportion of the recruits as they come in & shall take the necessary measures with Government to get them mounted & Equipped which done I propose sending them on by Troops of 60 Horse, 30 for each Regiment.

The number of Recruits to be raised added to what they have now in the Field will fall deficient at least one fourth of the Quota of this State,—this must be considered in the formation of the new Regiments the strength of which must bear the same proportion to the number originally designed for each.

I believe I before advised you of my intention to form the remains of the 9th Reg. at Fort Pitt into two Companies & to call down the supernumary officers General Washington has approved it and I have accordingly given the necessary Orders to Col^s. Broadhead & Gibern [?].

Agreeable to your orders I have directed Cap. Jicst [sic] with his artificers to move immediately to Bethany—I am intirely of your opinion that this Corp weak as it is will render much more service at that place considering its proximity to you & the number of Arms in that Neighbourhood wanting repair.

I have just reced advice of a movement of the Enemy towards Suffolk tho with what force I don't know, I am just setting off for Cobbin point but shall not let it prevent my meeting the officers the 10th Inst. at Chesterfield.

With the greatest regard

I am D^r. Gen^l

Your very hun Serv^l

Steuben, Maj: Gen:

Endorsed

From Baron Steuben

Feb^r 3^d, 1781.

[ANDREW PICKENS TO GEN. GREENE.]

Camp, Enoree river, S^o. Carolina, 8th April, 1781

Sir,

Immediately after I did myself the Honor of writing you from the Catawba, I marched for the Southward, On my arrival at Broad river I met Colonel Clark of Georgia on his retreat from the long Cane Settlement, where, on the 23^d. of last month he had a smart action with Major Dunlap, commanding a party of Cavalry and Infantry consisting of about ninety Men. The Colonels force was about one hundred and eighty, which he divided

¹ Only the signature is in Steuben's hand writing.

with two divisions, reserving out of them a small party to act as Dragoons. The attack was made by the Colonel with vigour and resolution and the Efforts of the Enemy to repel our men, notwithstanding the advantage of situation on their side was vain and ineffectual. Our Militia Horse charged their regulars who fled with precipitation altho their number exceeded ours. The Infantry after the flight of their Horse retreated to some Houses and after some time surrendered prisoners of war. A number of the Colonels Men had no Arms which brings down the disproportion of numbers. The Enemys loss was great for the amount of men, their Horse being chiefly killed in the flight, and great part of the Infantry before they surrendered.

The Prisoners are gone towards Virginia by way of the Mountains, among them three Officers, Captain Cozens and Ensigns Old and Swanton all belonging to the Garrison of Ninety Six. I am exceedingly sorry to inform you of the inhuman action committed on Major Dunlap after being delivered by Colonel Clark into the hands of a Guard prepared for that purpose at Gilbert Town in North Carolina. A set of men, chiefly unknown except one—Cobb an over Mountain Man forced the Guard and shot him. I have issued a Proclamation offering a reward of ten thousand dollars for the apprehending him and do not despair of yet getting him and sending him to you. I sent a Flag to Colonel Cruger intimating the matter to him and informed him with what horror and detestation American Officers looked on the act, intimating however, that the many barbarous massacres committed by those calling themselves their officers on our people after their capture, particularly the murder of Captain Watson a valuable young officer under the sanction of their own Flag might have actuated those persons to that mode of redress. I should inclose you a copy of my letter to him but it is misplaced I send you however a copy of his answer by which you will perceive his sentiments.

The Country here is in the greatest distress chiefly broken up for want of assistance, by the Enemy's marauding and plundering parties and unless something can shortly be done for them I am afraid they will in a great measure altogether quit the parts and had I not arrived at the time I did on Tiger River, I have reason to believe the whole Country would been evacuated by

our Friends. Colonel Cruger being reinforced by Innis's Corps marched with about three hundred regulars and two Hundred Tories and took post at Harrison's store on Fair Forest the thirty first Ultimo with an intention as was supposed and given out to establish a Garrison. I immediately collected the South Carolinians and being joined by the Georgians I determined to risque an Action and was advanced some way towards him, when I was informed he has made the best of his way for William's Fort fifteen Miles this side of Ninety Six; where I am informed he has taken post. You may assure yourself Sir, I shall do all in my power to prevent their return; but provision is so scarce it will be exceedingly difficult to maintain even the smallest party on this side that station. [sic] I have wrote General Sumter requesting him to assist me but have received as yet no answer I shall write him again but with what probability of success I know not. I must beg you to send me by this opportunity the most material intelligence as there is no certainty to be learnt here of any Event.

I am Sir with respect

Y^r very humble Serv^t.

And^w. Pickens²

I have sent you three receipts of Officers Servants taken at Tarltons defeat.

I must remark again to you I do not think my force sufficient unless speedily assisted to make a stand this side any way nigh the Fort.

In Dunlaps Defeat 34 killed, & 42 taken done by Col. Clark near Ninety Six

Honble Major Gen^l. Greene.

Endorsed

From Gen^l. Pickens

8 April 1781.

² Only the signature in Picken's hand writing.

[ISAAC SHELBY TO GEN. GREENE?]

Camp on Wattango Washington County
North Carolina 3^d. August 1781

Hon^d. Sir

In answer to your request of the 22^d. June last I rote you by the Express, that I should March by the 15th July with what force cou'd be rais'd in this quarter, but the Cherokee Treaty not being over found it impracticable to draw any force from here untill that important Business (to this frontier) was finally ratified, which was done the 29th July, and immediately every step taken to reinforce you; about 700 good rifle men well mounted were now in motion towards you & should have been down in as short a time as possible but an Express arrived in camp last night from General Pickens that informed us of the Enemys retreat to Orrangeburgh and perhaps to Charles Town, that distance being so very great for us, the warm season of the year & the men not prepared for so long a Tower, has induced Col. Levere of this County and my self from proceeding on our march, untill one hear farther accounts from that quarter tho the men are ordered to hold themselves in readiness to march on the shortest notice, and as our country is now in a state of peace and tranquillity, have no doubt but we can furnish you with a large proportion of good men from here when ever you may find necessary to require us.

I have the honour to be wth. respect

Your M^o. Ob^t. Humb^{le}. Serv^t.

Isaac Shelby.

Endorsed:

From Col^o. Shelby

Aug^t. 3^d, 1781

[LT. COL. WASHINGTON TO GEN. GREENE]

*[Addressed:]*The Hon^{le}Maj. Gen^l. Greene

Faver'd by

Maj. Marsbanck [Majoribanks]

Eutaw. Sep^t. 8th, 1781

Sir

I have the Misfortune to be a Prisoner of war, I am wounded with a Bayonet in my Breast, which together with the Contusion from the fall off my Horse which was killed makes me extremely sore: But I am in hope not dangerous.

I shall be extremely obliged to forward the enclosed to Capt. Watts & permit my Cloathing to be sent in as soon as Possible being informed by Col. Stuart that I am not to be indulg'd with a Parole on any Latitude. I have been treated politely by many of the British officers.

I have the Honor to be y^{rs}.

Very H. Serv^t.,
W. Washington

Maj. Gen^l. Greene.*Endorsed:*Lieut Col^o. Washington

September 8th '81.

[GOVERNOR JOHN RUTLEDGE TO GEN. GREENE]

*Addressed:*The Ho^{'ble} Major Gen^l. Greene.Congaree Sep. 10th 1781.D^r: Sir

I rec.^d last night, your favor of yesterday, & thank you for the Communication of the [illegible] it contained—I congratulate, most heartily on the glorious Victory of the 8th³— I hope you will be able to Clean up & improve it—&, if the Enemy will quit their Strong Hold (w^{ch} they cannot occupy long) I think you will give the finishing Blow to their possessions in the Country, by

³ Battle of Eutaw.

the total destruction of the remains of their army, whose spirits must be much lowered—at any rate, I conceive, should they be so fortunate as to get off, their well Men, by a rapid Moonlight March, they must commit their numerous wounded to your Mercy—May Heaven protect you my dear Sir, & always give you the Success you deserve,

Y^{rs}. Sincerely
J. Rutledge.

Endorsed:
From Gov^r. Rutledge
Sept. 10th 1781.

[FRANCIS MARION TO GEN. GREENE.]

Addressed:
The Honb^{le}. Maj. Gen^l. Greene.
Doughtys Plant^{nt}. Santee [?]
9th. Oct. 1781.

Sir:

Col^o. Maham has returned without meeting with any party of the Enemy, he was within a mile of the main body.

The night above last the Enemy moved their boats from Porchers but cannot yett find where to.

I have been Obliged to move for want of Ammunition as I have not one round p^r. man & Shud the Enemy Attempt crossing a party I must retire. I have sent the Bearer for a supply of Anmⁿ. if you cannot spare it I must get under your protection.

I hear there is two vessels of fever [?] off the Bar of Ch Town an Embargo is laid on the Ships—& orders to Gen. Gold [Gould] to hold himself in readiness to march to Charlestown at the shortest notice which is the reason of them keeping so close.

The Gen^l. is very Ill at Mahams or the Army was to make a movement on Saturday last.

I have the honour to be your Ob^t. S^vt.

Francis Marion

[COL. WILLIAM HARDING TO GEN. GREENE]

Addressed:

Major Gen. Nath^l. Greene
 Comm^dg. the
 American Army
 at Santee.

P^r M^r. Box
 Express

Pocotaligo 7th Nov.^{br} 1781.

Sir

Though I have not the pleasure of being Acquainted with you, I have taken the liberty to inform you when the British came to this place some time in Sep^r. for Rice, I detached Major Cooper with a Command to destroy the barr^{ls}: to prevent the Enemy from Moving the Rice, Major Fraser with his Horse attacked Major Cooper, & took three of his men, in my absence a Flagg was sent by Major Cooper to get those men Exchanged, Cap^t. Melton & Simon Fraser, went with the Flagg, who was met by Major Fraser, & seeing Simon Fraser's name in the Flagg, he rode back to Camp & desired the Flagg to wait for an Answer, when he returned with two Dragoons and ast Simon Fraser if he was the man who kild Ingles, Fraser replied he was, he was then taken & carried & put in Irons & now is in the provost, on pretence that Ingles was Murdered.

When Gen. Marion ordered me to the S^o Ward Fraser Came with me, On my arrival at the Round O—I sent a comm^d. to take the Field Officers of that Reg^{mt}. They surroundered Major Clitheraf's House, & Fraser ordered the door to be Opened, which was done, Ingles then ast who was there, Fraser answered friends to America, Ingles then went to Shut the door when Fraser fired at him & shott him in the Body, & he in a few minutes died.

Clitheral was made a Prisoner & brought to me the next day, & S^d. he was Shure Fraser would not have Shot Ingles, had he not attempted to Shut the door, this Sir is the pretended Murder for which he is detained, he has & the rest of the prisoners has sent to me to state this Matter to your Honor, to see if you will get them releast, from their confinement. A Cap^t. Palmer who was taken sometime Ago, by a party of men I sent to stop some

Boats, he is in a poor State of hilt & is verry Desireous to be Exchanged that he may go to his Reg.^m he is one of Lord Charles'es Core that is gone to the Wst. Indies, if you think proper he sais the Comm^{ds}. will Exchange him for a Cap^t. of ours.

I have this Moment rec^d. Express from L^t. Col^o. Sanders that the Enemy is Collecting their Horse at Dorchester, & from good Authority means to Come S^o. Ward to Burn all the Crops, they can & to Collect all the Cattle. They are Killing & Salting up all the Beef on Port Royall Island, when I am told they mean to Come On the Main its nots improbable but what they may Endeavour to form a junction, I will make Every Endeavour to prevent them from their Intention should they attempt anything of the kind, but dont think we will have sufficient Force unless you can give some assistance—I will be much Obligated to you for some powder, for my Reg^{mt} as we are in want of that Article.

I have Sir the honour to be Sir

Your Hon^r. Most Ob^t. Serv^t,

Will^m. Harding Col. Comm^{dg}.

the S^o. Ward Militia

N B the names of the Prisoners

Jn^o. Greggs

Geo. Jones

Sol^m. Legare

Atkin Channel

Simon Fraser

Cap^t. Rob^t. Palmer, of the British

Endorsed:

from Col^o. Harding

Nov^r. 7th. 1781

(To be continued)